



Antonio de Noli and the City of Noli

Foreword by the President of the Antonio de Noli Academic Society,
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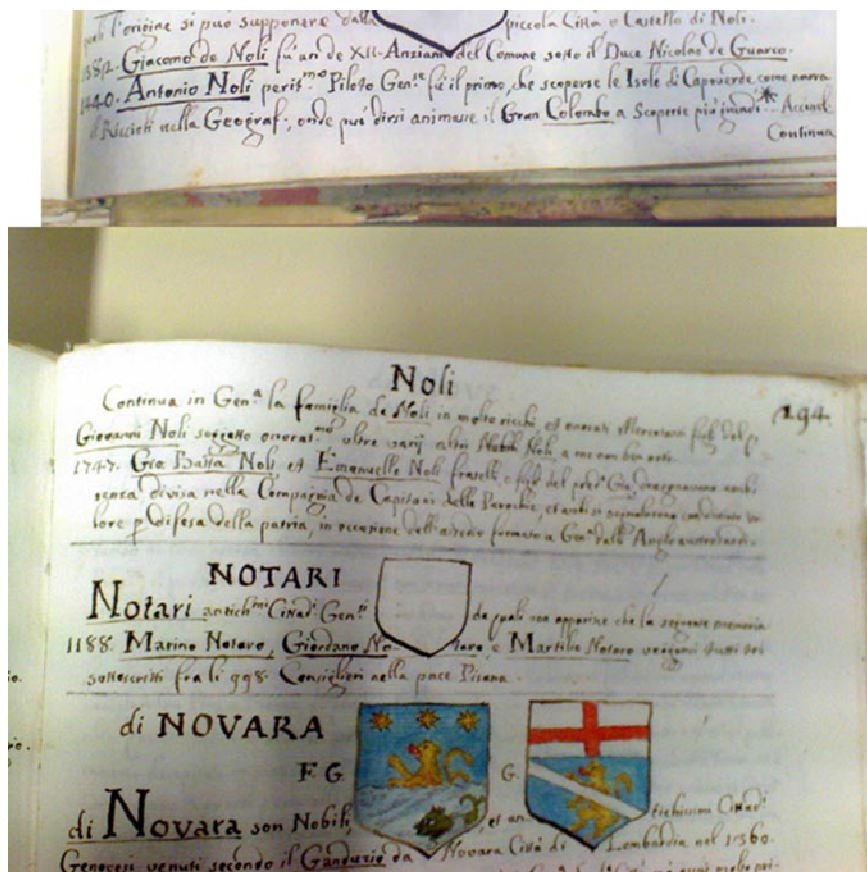
The strong relationships between the City of Noli and the historical stature of navigator Antonio de Noli and his maritime enterprise in West Africa and Cape Verde, it is at least two fold.

Genealogical and historical origins

In the first place there is the aspect of the genealogical and historical origins of the family de Noli to which Antonio de Noli and his brother Bartholomew belonged. In fact, during a research visit to Genoa in 2008 I was able to document an ancient manuscript I found in the library of the University of Genoa ("Famiglie Di Genova. Antiche, e Moderne, Estinte, e Viventi, Nobili, e Popolari") which in "Parte II, D.E.F.G.I.L.M.N.O./ MDCCLXXXIII", page 293, signaled the family of Antonio de Noli as historically originated in the City of Noli and its Castle¹.

¹ "Famiglie Di Genova. Antiche, e moderne, estinte, e viventi, nobili, e popolari". Parte II, D.E.F.G.I.L.M.N.O./ MDCCLXXXIII. Pages 293-294

My previous research had indicated that the original genealogical root comprised in the lineage of all the Noli families in Northern Italy - particularly Liguria and part of Piedmont and Lombardy – is to be found in the City of Noli².



Further, by means of the migration of several of the de Noli descendants along the seven hundred documented history of this family, we find represented this City of Noli root elsewhere in the world. Not only in Cape Verde, but also in the Americas and elsewhere in Europe.

Expedition presumably sailed from the Noli harbour

Secondly, we have the most likely fact – historically based – that the three-vessel expedition of Antonio de Noli and his brother Bartholomew towards Portugal in the beginning of that long exploration journey which ended with the discoveries of Cape Verde Islands, started right in the heart of the ancient Maritime Republic of Noli. Namely, its harbour.

² i.e.: the de Noli of Cameriano Castle in Novara, Bergamo, Parma.

When Genoa opened hostilities against Barcelona in the war for the control of the Occidental Mediterranean Sea, the naval expedition of the Genoese fleet commanded by Lazzaro Doria did departure in 1466 - as historically documented - from the port of Noli³. It is highly likely that the De Noli expedition towards Portugal – with a departure around that epoch - also sailed from Noli. These three reasons are behind that sound assumption:

The date of the Noli expedition has been estimated between 1449 and 1460, and if the port Genoa was not operative for technical reasons for Lazzaro Doria in the beginning of the sixties, neither could have been operative for any other fleet, including that one of Antonio de Noli. Another reason would be that the brothers De Noli, provided they were in the run for political reasons (as historians have repeatedly reported) they would not have the possibility to arm their fleet, contract their numerous crew, etc., at Genoa in the open. The third reason would be that familiar ties (amid a family known as traditionally, for centuries ahead, in the shipyard enterprise) would have enabled the preparation of their small fleet in the port of Noli, the family old *alma mater*.

Hence, the Antonio de Noli Academic Society, initiative taker and co-organizer of this Conference “Da Noli a Capo Verde” - *From Noli to Cape Verde* – together with the Embassy of Cape Verde and the S. Antonio Cultural Foundation, wishes to express its warm and genuine thanks to the City of Noli for making possible the concretization of this idea.

A homage to the People of Cape Verde

Finally, in celebrating the 550 anniversary of the brothers de Noli historical⁴ explorations and discoveries, we would like to pay also homage to the proud, courageous, and civil people of Cape Verde. To their heroic struggle against colonialism which ended just 35 years ago. Let Italian ancestor Antonio de Noli remain a distinguished conqueror, a key-opener of acculturation or a forerunner of colonialism. Indeed, the first European Governor in Sub-Saharan Africa opening the door of Africa to so called civilizations. But above all, let colonialism and its antihuman voracity be buried forever. Let our celebration of today “Da Noli a Capo Verde” be also the most beautiful message of brotherhood, equality of all nations,

³ Gallo Antonio, *Genovesi e Catalani: Guerra sul mare. Relazione di Antonio Gallo (1466). Memorie Genovesi. A curia de Clara Fossati. Genova, 1977*

social justice, personal integrity, and freedom for every single soul. “Da Capo Verde, da Noli” to all the good people of this world.

* Opening speech at the Conference *Da Noli a Capo Verde* (“From Noli to Cape Verde”), City of Noli (Savona), Italy, 18-19 September 2010. Scholarly conference organized by the City of Noli, the Cultural Foundation San’t Antonio, the Embassy of Cape Verde to Italy, and the [Antonio de Noli Academic Society](#).